

Senate Early Learning and K-12 Committee

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Work Session: Family Engagement Strategies

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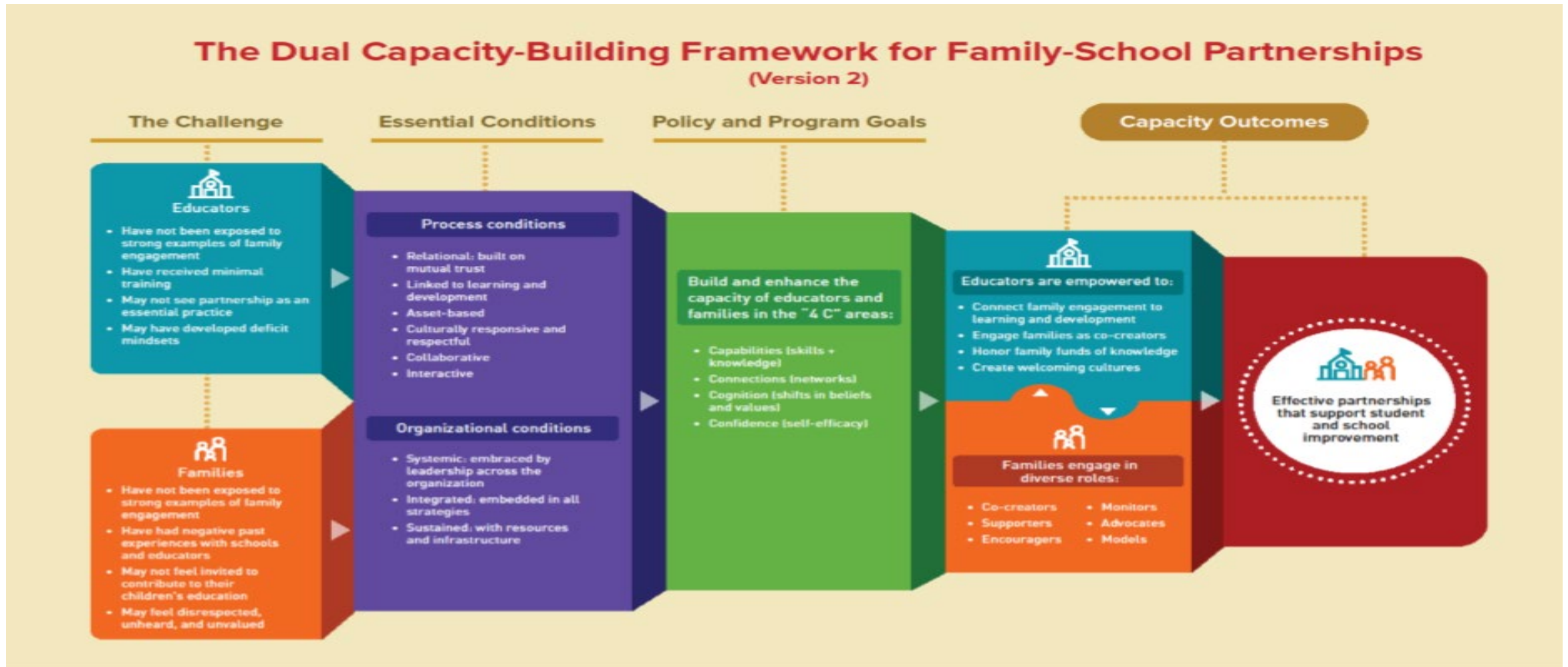
Family Engagement

“Family engagement refers to the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children’s development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems.”

– U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Policy Statement On Family Engagement From The Early Years To The Early Grades, 2016



Family Engagement is an evidence-based strategy.



⁴² Mapp, K. L. & Bergman, E. (2019). Dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships (Version 2). www.dualcapacity.org





FAMILY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

2021 REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Definition of Family Engagement (What and Who)

- *Family engagement is a full and equitable partnership among families, educators, providers, and communities to support learners' development from birth through college and career. It is a collective responsibility that means doing with—not doing for—families.*

[Family Engagement Framework 2021 Report to the Legislature](#)



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Workgroup Definitions

Federal

"Family engagement refers to the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children's development, learning, and wellness, including in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems."

State

Family engagement is a full and equitable partnership among families, educators, providers, and communities to support learners' development from birth through college and career. It is a collective responsibility that means doing with—not doing for—families.



FAMILIES ARE OUR PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

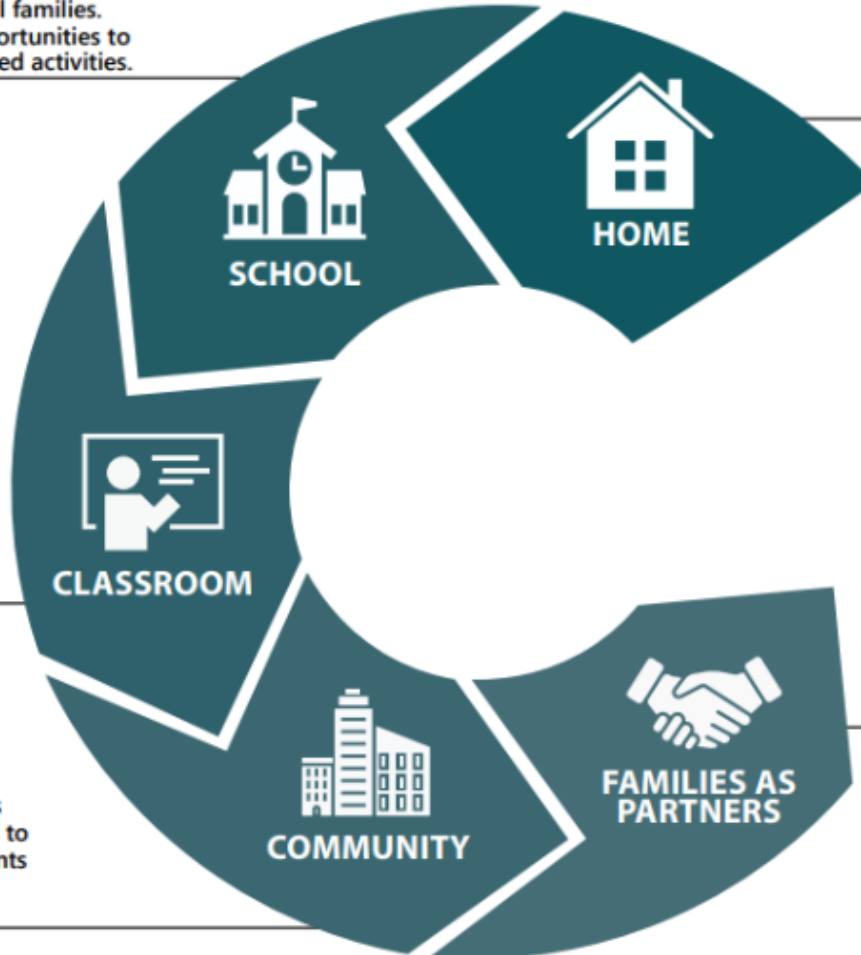
Academic success starts at home and it consolidates at school, with the continuous partnership and support of families. Families and schools must build trusting relationships and keep ongoing two-way communication for the partnership to work.

School has a welcoming learning environment to engage all families. Families are aware of opportunities to participate in school-related activities.

Family provides an environment supportive of developmental needs of children. The student builds awareness of the importance of education.

Teachers and parents share student concerns of the whole child. Families are ready to support the education of their child in the classroom in different ways.

The LEA identifies and integrates community resources to enhanced school programs. Families use community programs to increase child's skills, talents and/or obtain needed services.



LEA and families recognize the importance of school-family partnerships in school improvement efforts. Both know that families' perspectives can help the school system in their efforts to increase student academic success.

Source: [OSPI PFE](#)

Family Engagement Framework Workgroup Report 2021 (P. 3)

Values and Principles (Why)

- Shared power and responsibility
- Relationships are the cornerstone of family engagement
- All families have strengths,
- Family engagement promotes equity and success

Family Engagement Framework Elements



1. **Assessing Strengths and Barriers-** A collaborative strengths-based process of assessing strengths and barriers is an important first step in the creation of a family engagement action plan. The process itself is an opportunity for listening and learning that can bring the community together and build trust, establishing common understanding of family engagement and common goals.
2. **Confronting Injustice and Acknowledging Intersectionality in order to Address Inequities Equity** -is achieved when all students and families thrive, and success is no longer dependent on socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, family make up, and other factors. An equitable program of family engagement cannot be achieved without first confronting injustice and acknowledging the role of intersectionality.
3. **Allocating Resources to Build and Sustain Capacity for Family Engagement** - The allocation of resources including money and time demonstrate the values of an organization. Without these resources, family engagement efforts will be empty and unsustainable. For example, a commitment to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and anti-racism, must be supported by the allocation of resources to support that work.
4. **Systematically Building Positive/Trusting Relationships-** This means that school systems and processes are built in a way that intentionally support ongoing relationship building and incorporate feedback loops that demonstrate responsiveness and build trust.
5. **Establishing Equitable Leadership and Shared Responsibility-** A school with equitable leadership and shared responsibility has family engagement that goes beyond symbolic gestures to true co-creation. This element goes beyond the education of individual students and seeks to transform schools and systems.
6. **Creating an Inclusive Culture and Welcoming Families-** Districts and school buildings embrace diversity, empathetically listen, and learn, honor both the strengths and barriers of all groups and individuals, give space for the voices of everyone, and invest time and resources in the growth and development of all.
7. **Fostering Communication between Schools, Families, and Communities** -Good communication is intentional, relevant, dynamic, reciprocal, culturally responsive, interactive, and two-way. This allows families, students, and communities to develop a strong sense of mutual rapport, respect, and trust, and a strong connection to school.
8. **Sustaining Family Engagement Across Developmental Stages** -The nature of family engagement shifts as the child develops and grows. The methods and purpose of engagement strategies should be appropriate to the developmental stage of the child and family and flexible enough to be tailored to the specific needs of the relationship.



The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

- **Title I** requirements and resources
 - Responsibilities of LEAs
 - Responsibilities of schools
 - Joint responsibility of LEAs and schools
- **Title II** requirements and resources
- **Title III** requirements and resources
- **Title IV** requirements and resources



Highlights of Responsibilities of LEAs*

ESEA References	Responsibilities of LEAs receiving Title I funds:
Sec. 1116(a)(1)	Reach out to all parents and family members.
Sec. 1116(a)(2)	Jointly develop a written parent and family engagement policy.
Sec. 1116(a)(2)(A)	Involve parents in the development of the LEA Title I plan and support and improvement plan, if school is identified for targeted or comprehensive support under the accountability system.
Sec. 1116(a)(2)(B)	Build capacity of participating Title I schools for parent and family engagement, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise.
Sec. 1116(a)(2)(C)	Coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with other laws and programs.
Sec. 1116(a)(2)(D)	Annually evaluate content and effectiveness of the LEA Parent and Family Engagement Policy: see details here .
Sec. 1116(a)(2)(E)	Design evidence-based strategies and revise PFE policies: see details here .
Sec. 1116(a)(2)(F)	May set an LEA-level Parent Advisory Board: see details here .



Examples of LEA Work

ESD	LEA	LEA/School	Project Highlights	Demographic Highlights
105	West Valley Yakima	Kindergarten Nights, Preparing Migrant, ELL, and Monolingual Families for school	West Valley Yakima School District offers Kindergarten Readiness Nights for migrant and ELL children who have not received support to prepare them for Kindergarten. In addition, they offer a home visiting summer program where Monolingual families learn ways to support their children at school.	K-12 White 58% Hispanic 34% Asian 2.6% ELL 8.5% Low-Income 47% Migrant 1.4% Students with Disabilities 15%
123	Finley	Reset Families— PBIS and Social Emotional Learning Approach	Reset Families breaks generational patterns of coercive family interactions and replaces these with positive social and emotional learning strategies. Parents and families receive instruction on creating a shared family vision, strengthening family connections, setting clear expectations, helping kids manage their own behavior, using restorative practices effectively, using consequences as teaching tools, and building relationships. Materials are available in both English and Spanish, please contact Finley SD for more information on how to access these documents.	K-12 Hispanic/Latino 50.2% White 46% Multilingual Students 78% Low-Income 81.2% Migrant 7.4% Students with Disabilities 14.2%

Examples of LEA Work

ESD	LEA	Form Details LEA/School	Project Highlights	Demographic Highlights
101	Spokane	Logan Elementary	<p>The "Parents as Partners" project has evolved to provide parents with a more complete picture of what school looks like at Logan and how they can support their student(s) as partners with us in promoting positive school culture and academic success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interactive sessions for students and parents included technology for learning, celebrating Read Across America in the library, hands-on science activities, and math interactive learning. Parent only sessions included accessing family resources/housing, internet safety, promoting early literacy, supporting reading in the middle grades, and transition strategies for middle school. Announcement Parent Session Class List 	<p>K-6 English Learners 12.9% Low Income 90% Homeless 11.2% Students with Disabilities 20.8% Hispanic/Latino 17.7% Black/African American 6.4% White 50.6%</p>



Support for Families

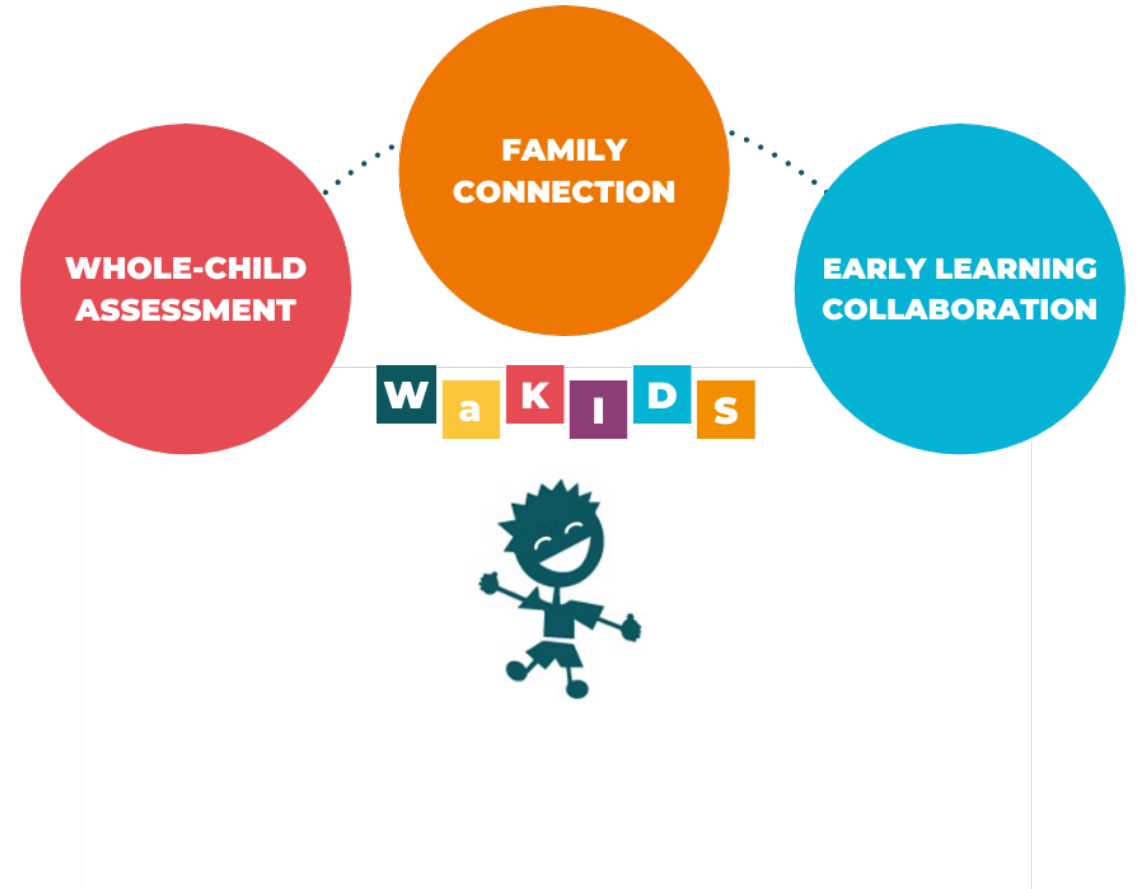
- The [Multilingual Families Toolkit | Spanish](#) is designed to help Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) create and maintain effective strategies with multilingual families. We explore and model best practices for the use of technology in teaching, as well as for assessing and communicating with diverse adults.
- [Family Engagement Toolkit](#) is a companion resource to OSPI's Reopening Washington Schools 2020 District Planning Guide, issued June 2020. This resource provides guidance and strategies for building strong family, school, district, and community partnerships, and identifies resources to build and strengthen connections across these groups.

Legal Requirements for Language Access: Title 34, Nondiscrimination Under Programs Receiving Federal Assistance • Chapter 28A.642 RCW, Discrimination Prohibition • Chapter 392-190 WAC, Elimination Of Unlawful Discrimination In Public Schools



Support for Beginning Families

The Family Connection component of WaKIDS provides an opportunity for kindergarten families to meet individually with their child's teacher to begin building relationships at the very start of their K-12 journey.



Early Learning Family Listening Sessions

OSPI and DCYF have been collaborating to improve family engagement during children's transitions between early learning systems, including conducting family listening sessions to hear about families' hopes, barriers, and what success looks like for their children.

Listening sessions are jointly coordinated with family advocacy groups such as:

- Hands and Voices
- Washington Partnership for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)
- Early Services for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) Parent Institute for Engagement
- Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP
- First Five Years and Beyond
- Open Doors for Multicultural Families



Challenges For Families

Why Don't Families Participate?

UNDERSTAND THE BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT



Challenges For LEAs

- Resources
 - Time
 - Staffing
 - Knowledge
 - Family engagement in Reopening Plans- short term ESSER funding, need sustained state level funding
 - Language and disability for families



Opportunities

- The pandemic shifted the way family engagement is viewed. No longer is it considered “something extra”- it is essential.
- Family engagement strategies were improved and enhanced in order to reach every family and student.
- Community Based Organizations (CBO’s) partnered with LEA’s to serve families in the communities in which they lived in culturally responsive ways.
- Focus on using and funding the prototypical family engagement coordinators
- Sustained funding beyond short term federal ESSER funds (many Reopening Plans invested in family engagement coordinators)





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